



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
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Royal Green Jackets trip down Rock memory lane

A group of military veterans from the Royal Green Jackets – one of the most popular British Army units ever stationed on the Rock – together with a comrade from the Royal Artillery, returned to Gibraltar last week for a brief holiday and stroll down memory lane.

Messrs Richards, Ashby, Caw, Holcombe, Byrne, Maddock, Robinson and their respective spouses were based at the old Lathbury Barracks between 1965 and 1977, coinciding with most of the closed frontier period when life on the Rock was very different to what it is now.

During an information packed tour of the Rock they were given by former Miss Gibraltar and current GTB Information Office manager Gail Francis-Tiron, which brought back many wonderful memories for them, they were able to witness at first-hand how much Gibraltar has changed since they were last here.

The former soldiers, armed this time “not with a rifle and Bergan but with a wallet and back-pack,” were also deeply impressed with the scale of the Rock’s physical transformation and how the community “had retained its unique identity.”

The group rekindled fond recollections of their life in Gibraltar, including important family moments like the birth of a son at the Royal Naval Hospital for one of the couples, and memories of the favourite places they used to enjoy during their lengthy stay here.

They commented that even while still on the plane when the Rock came into sight, memories of their arrival the first time round had come flooding back to them.

Soon after touching down on the Gibraltar airport, the same spot they had landed back in 1965, they were entertained to dinner at the Devil’s Tower Camp, where the Royal Gibraltar Regiment has its headquarters, by Garrison Sergeant Major Gary Mitchell.

They further described Gibraltar as “the warmest and most patriotic part of the UK” and expressed a desire to repeat the experience next year.

Minister for Tourism, Public Transport, Commercial Affairs and the Port Neil Costa MP said he was delighted at the news of the return to Gibraltar of the former British Army soldiers.

“Gibraltar is proud of its solid links with the British Armed Forces and to hear that a number of ex-Royal Green Jackets had returned to the Rock after so many years is simply wonderful. We are extremely glad that they enjoyed their stay, rediscovering they old haunts they frequented back in the 1960’s and 1970’s.

“We welcome the visit of British military veterans to the Rock which historically, has been their ‘home’ base and look forward to receiving many more such visits in the future.”

Mr Costa also thanked Gail Francis-Tiron for conducting the tour of the visiting army veterans and spouses.